GRAVENSTEIN APPLES

Where They Grow

SEBASTOPOL

Sonoma County, California

King Gravenstein

By Julius Myron Alexander

This is the land of Apple King,
For all of its beauty, praises ring;
Soil and climate soft and mellow,
Sunsets gold and crimson yellow;
Soft South wind just kissing cool,
'Tis harvest time now, in Sebastopol

Spring time, then, in color green,
Apple tree here and blossom seen;
Roses bloom and birds of song,
Happy all, as day is long;
Then, the time for fruitage sowing,
Springtime then for apple growing.

There the long and shading rows,
Apple trees—rare fruitage grows;
Color rich in red and green,
Everywhere 'tis Gravenstein;
King in kingdom he to rule,
In God's land—Sebastopol.

Tiers in boxes, piled on high,
With the best beneath the sky;
Gold is yellow, worth its weight,
Apples too with it shall mate;
King and man and lord and Queen,
Beloved by all 'tis Gravenstein.

Then welcome to all, in this land
of ours,
A welcome to city and shaded
bowers,
Here 'tis our heart and here 'tis
our hand,
Here 'tis we give the best of our
land;
Here of its sunshine, here of its
wealth,
Its beauty, its fruitage, its life
giving health.

Then bow to a King, to a King in
the West,
Sing loud of his praise, for he is
the best;
Royal his crown, as glittering gold,
His subjects are all, both young
and old.
Then love and a song to King
Apple in rule,
And a welcome to you from
Sebastopol.

Sebastopol is 56 miles from San Francisco, in Western Sonoma County, and 8 miles from the Pacific ocean. It is famous for its cherries, poultry, especially for its berries and apples. It is progressive and active in business, has municipal water, sewer system and cement sidewalks. Population about 2000, electric lights and power, telegraph and telephone, express, local interurban electric and steam railroads.

Gravenstein Apples - Where They Grow

Sebastopol, Sonoma County, California

In Sonoma County for a Century

It will not be denied that a century of succesful living in a county constitutes a home making.

The Gravenstein apple is at home in Sonoma county for it has made a most successful record since it was brought here by the Russian colonists in 1812 or 1813, some fourteen years before it was introduced into the Eastern part of the United States. Probably the greater number of our orchards were propagated from trees grown in the East.

The Gravenstein of Sebastopol differs from those grown in New England and Canada in its early ripening and high color, besides reaching a perfection of flavor not elsewhere found. In the apple growing district about Sebastopol, Gravenstein apples ripen from two weeks to a month earlier than those in other sections. In the eastern states the variety does not come to market till October while our first shipments are due to go out the last of July or the first of August. The apple is not well adapted to the hot interior valleys and is slow to ripen in the immediate coast districts.

The original plantings of the Russian colonists in this county are still bearing fruit. They are practically

a hundred years old and for about fifty years have had little or no care. They are an indication that when a man plants an apple orchard he plants for his children and his grandchildren and gives them a heritage that will continue to increase in value for years.

The freedom from diseases and insect pests is also attested by the long life of the Russian plantings. Of course all our orchardists use sprays to keep the trees clean and free from pests, but this is as much a preventative as a cure. It is more expensive with other varieties than with Gravensteins.

Wonderful Shipping Qualities

The Sebastopol Gravenstein will reach any market in the world at a time when there is no staple apple on sale. It matters not whether it be an American, European or Australian market. This makes it impossible to over produce this variety of apples in this particular district. While all winter varieties of apples may come into competition from various apple growing regions, the early Sebastopol grown Gravenstein will have an uncompetative market of its own.

The fruit is well developed without irrigation and will carry around the world in first class condition. In fact there is always a demand for the fruit for Australian markets because it will carry across the Pacific under ice and trans-ship to all the ports of the adjacent territory without loss of flavor, or as the Australians say: "going dead."

The apples shown at the Watsonville Apple Annual in October, 1910, were put in storage in August and scored 100 points, the decision being made by the most critical judges in the United States. This score indicated absolute perfection in quality, size and color. Some of these

some apples were kept on ice at Sebastopol till June 2, 1911, when they were taken to San Francisco to be photographed for the three-color cut used on the outside of this little booklet.

No Irrigation Here

The soil on which the Gravenstein is grown is sandy loam overlying a yellow clay sub-soil. The top soil runs from 6 to 24 inches in depth and makes cultivation of orchards the easiest possible. The moisture-containing sub-soil close to the surface is protected during the summer by the dry top which acts as a mulch to retain the moisture. With ordinary cultivation moisture is found two or three inches from the surface. This makes it possible to grow any kind of fruit and almost all vegetables without irrigation.

Climatic Conditions

One feature of the climate which makes for good in the production of crops is the amount of summer night fogs. They usually appear toward morning and are dissipated by the sun early in the forenoon. These fogs supply moisture for the foliage, and berries especially.

The region under discussion is free from winter frosts in excess, so that in places oranges are grown in limited quantities for home use. The winter is a rainy season with about 50 rainy days in six months. The rain fall will average 35½ inches, and for four or five months we have no rain.

The days are pleasant, not hot, neither are they cold and foggy like on the coast. The climate is a fresh coast climate with enough of the warm interior to make it ideally pleasant.

Our Other Apples

While we specialize in growing the Gravenstein apple at Sebastopol, we raise many other varieties, notably the Spitzenberg, Jonathan, Wagner, Newton Pippin, Rome Beauty, Bellefleur, and some others which remain from plantings made early in the history of this apple growing district. Many of the less desirable kinds are being grafted to the special variety so well adapted to our district. Many orchardists mix two or three varieties in an orchard on account of pollinization. The Gravenstein, with the first four named in this paragraph, are especially recommended.

Orchard Fillers

It often happens that new plantings are made and those who cannot afford to wait the required number of year for trees to mature resort to some filler for temporary income. There are three main side lines used in this district: Berries, grapes and poultry.

BERRIES

The varieties of berries are largely Logan, Mammoth and Lawton blackberries. Raspberries, gooseberries and strawberries are grown in lesser quantities. The total crop of berries from this section will run above 2000 tons this year for which the grower is receiving $50 a ton from canneries and jelly works,. for berries too ripe to ship east. The berries shipped to market for table uses will bring the grower close to $80 a ton, f. o. b. Sebastopol. The crop is handled by two co-operative berry associations, The Sebastopol Berry Growers Inc. which ships table berries as far east as Minneapolis and way points, and the Sonoma County Berry Growers' Association,

which thus far has marketed its product in solid pack for canneries.

The yield will run as high as 7 tons an acre on well kept lands, but three or four tons is near the average crop. It is usual to remove the berries after six or eight years, as the apple trees then need all the space. Of course there are many fields where berries are the exclusive crop.

GRAPES

The second filler is wine or table grapes. There are many large wineries within easy reach for marketing the crop. At Sebastopol we have one of the Italian-Swiss establishments, at Graton and Forestville we have two independent wineries, with several smaller ones close at hand. The price this year will be close to $20 a ton for grapes, possibly better than that. Grapes are not an expensive crop to grow. They root deeper than berries and cover the ground more as the vines attain age, and do not come to bearing as early as berries. They do not, therefor, make as good a filler for apple orchards, but where the grapes are established they are a good crop to carry along while young apple trees are growing.

POULTRY

One of the many side issues, is poultry. It in no way interferes with the growing of fruits, in fact the chickens aid in fertility, and in keeping the orchards free from bugs It is indeed a very prominent business in Sonoma county, the land of a million hens. Probably no district in the world exceeds Petaluma in poultry production. Sebastopol marks the northern limits of this famous poultry center. The shipment of poultry products from Sebastopol last year amounted to

$321,000.00. This represents some 900,000 dozens of eggs. Poultry users tell us that it costs them about $1.50 for feed for a hen one year and that they receive about $2 and sometimes more, making a net profit of $1 to $1.50 above the cost of maintenance. To establish a plant of any size will cost $1.25 for each hen. This includes fencing, houses and stock grown from incubator size to laying.

Apple Growers Union

With the wineries and berry growers organizations must be classed the Sebastopol Apple Growers' Union, an organization formed for marketing the crop of packed apples.

The Union operates three packing houses, one at Sebastopol, which is the largest, and business center of the association, one at Graton, and one at Turner Station on the electric railroad. The pack is standardized and guaranteed as to quality, size, color, and that it will pass the most stringent quarantine regulations of foreign countries. The capacity of the three houses is about 200,000 boxes this year and packs in 3, 3½, 4 and 4½ tier in two grades of fancy and choice. Every apple sent out under the Union label is guaranteed as represented. The price of packing apples is from $40 to $60 a ton this year. The Earl Fruit Co. and Garcia & Maggini operate packing houses here also.

Apple By-Products

The output of dried apples is no small item and it becomes a valuable by-product to the apple grower. All apples which fall while picking, also any not suitable for packing stock, are made into dried

apples and the early market is taken advantage of by the Sebastopol district. This season dried apples sold as high as 15c a pound to August 14th, with a later market of 10¾ cents. The early windfalls, thinnings from the trees, as well as the cores and peelings are sent to the juice works—the cores to the vinegar factory and the fine small perfect apples to the jelly works. It is not necessary for the grower to lose a core, so well organized is our marketing system. The dried apple output is 1100 tons.

Advantages of Residence at Sebastopol

Sebastopol is a town of about 2000 people with all the modern conveniences found in towns of this size anywhere. It has a fine grammar school, and here is located a ... high school for the fifteen districts found in the outlying territory. It has a corps of six teachers and is fully accredited at the State University and at Stanford. It carries a course in agriculture and a thoroughly practical course in business.

A public library is one of the new features of the town.

There are two banks in Sebastopol, and their deposits are constantly increasing with the development of the fruit section.

To say that the proceeds from an acre of Gravensteins will run as high as $800 or $1000 an acre looks very large, but the best of them have done that. The small, well cared for orchard in full bearing will give a living income and a bank account.

Santa Rosa, the county seat, and Petaluma are the largest towns in the county. They are seven and

sixteen miles from Sebastopol respectively.

Railroad Shipping Facilities

The rural districts are reached by telephone lines as well as mail deliveries in all directions. The Petaluma and Santa Rosa electric railroad traverses the entire length of the district and gives hourly service from early morning to midnight. It centers at Sebastopol and runs to Petaluma on the south, Santa Rosa on the east, and Forestville on the north. The rates are reasonable and tide water connection is made at Petaluma for freight with steamers to San Francisco. A traffic arrangement has been made with the Western Pacific for eastern shipments. Sebastopol also has the Northwestern Pacific railroad which connects with the Southern Pacific at Santa Rosa, and handles a large percentage of freight traffic to all points.

About Our Neighbors

The small places in Gold Ridge district are Forestville, seven miles to the north and near the Russian river. It has a bank, winery, good school with three teachers, and the necessary mercantile establishments and small manufacturies for a town of its size. Graton has a cannery, winery, graded school with three teachers, and the stores of a thriving community. It is four miles north of Sebastopol. Both of these places are in the best of the apple growing district and are desirable places for residence and trade. Hessel is a smaller center, which has a lot of "get there" implanted in its citizens by nature. It is a large poultry center, in fact the largest chicken ranches in this disrtict are at Hessel. Roblar is also a cross

roads station with stores and a good thriving country back of it.

To the west of Sebastopol are Occidental and Freestone and the most important Russian river summer resorts, including Bohemian Grove, Camp Meeker and Monte Rio

More Crop Figures

The cherry crop handled at Sebastopol in 1910 was 700,000 pounds and that was no small item.

The grape crop was worth over $100,000. Three wineries handled $89,000 worth of grapes and the three or four smaller ones crushed enough more to make up the estimated amount.

The poultry industry is organized for marketing purposes in the Sonoma County Poultry Association and the members keep in close touch with each other. They have a long-time contract with a shipping house which fixes a minimum price of 20 cents for eggs, and a low differential between the local and the San Francisco markets.

Peaches, plums, pears, prunes, and other fruits are grown in this section. In fact any of the fruits that are grown on the unirrigated soils of California do exceptionally well here. We have a soil that retains its moisture, giving it to the plants as needed. Potatoes and onions, squashes and tomatoes are not to be omitted from the important list as they are all commercial products. The vegetables grown for immediate home use of the growers are many and varied.

Winnings at Watsonville

The country is comparatively in its infancy and has not been exploited, but it is "all wool and a yard wide." At the Watsonville Apple Annual last fall we carried off twenty-nine medals and three cups

on the apple display from Sebastopol. We scored the highest per centage of any district and won the silver cup for the best box.

Luther Burbank's Big Gardens

Luther Burbank, the wizard of horticulture, has his principal gardens in the hills close to the town limits. His home is in Santa Rosa, but his world famous productions are grown on Sebastopol soil. He chose the location on our slopes because of soil and climatic conditions which enable him to grow and propogate plants from every temperate and sub-tropical clime.

Luther Burbank, the famous horticulturist, has said this regarding the Gravenstein apple and its propagation in this section: "The Gravenstein apple has, above all others, proved to be the money winner in Sonoma County. It is a healthy vigorous tree. It always bears a good crop, never overbearing as many varieties do, is of the best quality of all known apples taking into account all uses to which the apple is put. It is the best drying apple for quality and appearance when dried. It is handsome in appearance, good size, superior quality for dessert or cooking, and especially for market.

"It has often been said that if the Gravenstein apple could be had throughout the year no other apple need be grown."

Compiled and Printed by
The Analy Standard, Sebastopol

Compliments of
Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce